Research Notes for Sarah Cox Rook (1784 - 1861)

Research Overview:

Sarah Cox was born in 1784 in Hothfield, Kent, into a well-documented Cox family with deep roots in the county. Her parents, siblings, and grandparents are known, and the Cox family can be traced across multiple generations in parish records. This breadth of documentation distinguishes Sarah from her husband, Samuel Rook, whose origins remain limited to a single maternal line. Sarah enters the record not as an isolated figure, but as part of an established family network with continuity across time and place.

Sarah's early life is instead best understood through continuity of place and family. She was born into a Cox family long established in Kent. Even after her marriage, her movements stayed within the same group of neighboring parishes, and her children who survived to adulthood overwhelmingly remained in England. Across the next generations, Sarah's children and grandchildren established more stable households and improved their circumstances, while remaining connected to the region where Sarah herself lived.

In 1812, Sarah married Samuel Rook and entered a household with limited means. From that point forward, her life appears consistently in the parish records of Selling and Sheldwich, primarily through the baptisms of her children and later census entries. These records place the household within the lowest economic tier, including periods when Samuel was associated with the workhouse and later recorded as a pauper. While the records do not describe Sarah's daily life, they show her sustained presence within the same parish setting over several decades, as a wife, mother, and later widow.

Time Line:

Jul 1784– **Born** at Hotfield, Kent, England.[1]

1 Aug 1784 – **Baptism** at Hotfield, Kent, England.[2]

Sarah, the daughter of James Cox and Ann Giles, was born on 1 August 1784 in Hothfield, Kent, England. She died in October 1861 in Kent. Samuel married SARAH COX on 12 October 1812 in St. Mary the Virgin, Selling, Kent.

28 May 1787 - Birth of sister Lydia Ann Cox (1787 – 1862) at Hotfield, Kent, England.[3]

19 Jun 1793 - Death of father James Cox (1740 - 1793) at Hotfield, Kent, England.[4]

12 Jun 1794 - Death of sister Hannah Cox (1779 - 1794) at Hotfield, Kent, England.[5]

[1] England Births and Christenings, 1538-1975", database, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:NNVH-S4D: 5 February 2023), Sarah Cox, 1784.

[2] England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975

[3] England Births and Christenings, 1538-1975", database, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:J7GW-N5G: 5 February 2023), Lydia Cox, 1787.

[4] England Deaths and Burials, 1538-1991", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:J8KH-WY3: Sun Jul 14 11:30:05 UTC 2024), Entry for James Cox, 19 Jun 1793.

[5] England, Select Deaths and Burials, 1538-1991

12 Oct 1812 - Marriage to Samuel Rook at St Mary the Virgin, Snelling, Kent, England.[6]

1813 - Birth of son Stephen Rook (1813 - 1884) at Snelling, Kent, England.[7]

STEPHEN ROOK, baptized on 11 April 1813 in Selling, Kent, and married on 28 November 1841 in St. Mary Magdalene, Woolwich, England, SARAH BLAKE. He died on 4 November 1884 at 5 Victoria Street, Belvedere, Erith, Kent.

1815 - Birth of daughter Elisabeth Rook (1815 - 1837) at Snelling, Kent, England.[8]

ELIZABETH ROOK, born on 21 May 1815 in Sheldwich, and married on 16 August 1834 in Selling, CHARLES WEBB. She died in June 1837 in Kent.

1818 - Birth of daughter Sarah Rook (1818 - 1890) at Sheldwich, Kent, England.[9]

SARAH ROOK was born on 11 January 1818 in Sheldwich and married THOMAS BARBER. She died in September 1890 in Faversham, Kent.

1820 - Birth of daughter Matilda Rook (1820 - 1880) at Sheldwich, Kent, England.[10]

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[6] Selling St. Mary the Virgin, Selling, Kent, England, Marriage Banns, 1754 - 1814, p. [43], Samuel Rook - Sarah Cox, 1812; digital image, "Canterbury Marriage," FindMyPast; citing Canterbury Archdeaconry Banns 1754 - 1928, Canterbury Cathedral Archives, U3/229/1/9; FHL microfilm 1850190, item 14.

[7] Selling St. Mary the Virgin Parish, Selling, Kent Co., England, Baptism, 1813 - 1849, p. 2, Stephen Rook, 1813; digital image, "Canterbury Baptisms," FindMyPast; citing Kent, Canterbury Archdeaconry Baptisms 1538 - 1912, Canterbury Cathedral Archives, U3/229/1/4

[8] Sheldwich St. James Parish, Sheldwich, Kent, England, Baptisms, 1813 - 1856, p.5, no. 38, Elizabeth Rook, 1815; Canterbury Cathedral Archives, U3/186/1/3; FHL microfilm 2354740 item 5.

[9] Sheldwich St. James parish, Sheldwich, Kent, England, Baptisms, 1813 - 1856, p.11, no. 83, Sarah Rook, 1818; Canterbury Cathedral Archives, U3/186/1/3; FHL item 5.

[10] Sheldwich St. James parish, Sheldwich, Kent, England, Baptisms, 1813 - 1856, p.11, no. 83, Matilda Rook, 1820; Canterbury Cathedral Archives, U3/186/1/3; FHL microfilm 2354740 item 5.

MATILDA ROOK was born on 11 June 1820 in Sheldwich and married on 12 October 1844 in Sheldwich, GEORGE SHILLING. She died on 12 May 1880 in Ospringe, Kent.

1822 - Birth of son Charles Henry Rook (1822 - 1901) at Sheldwich, Kent, England.[11]

CHARLES HENRY ROOK, born on 22 August 1822 in Sheldwich, and married circa 1855, ELLEN LANE. He died on 3 October 1901 in Wilmot Township, Waterloo, Ontario.

1825 - 6 Mar 1825 - Birth of daughter Rebecca Rook (1825 - 1886) at Sheldwich, Kent, England.[12]

REBECCA ROOK, born on 6 March 1825 in Sheldwich and married on 12 October 1845 in Ospringe, Kent, THOMAS JOHNCOCK. She died on 8 December 1886 in Selling.

23 Mar 1827 - Death of mother Anne Giles (1815 - 1827) at Sheldwich, Kent, England.[13]

14 Dec 1828 - Birth of son George Rook (1828 -) at Sheldwich, Kent, England.[14]

GEORGE ROOK was born on 14 December 1828 in Sheldwich.12 He served in the Royal Regiment of Artillery from 1848 until 1854.13

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[11] Sheldwich St. James parish, Sheldwich, Kent, England, Baptisms, 1813 - 1856, p.22, no. 176, Charles Rook, 1822; Canterbury Cathedral Archives, U3/186/1/3; FHL microfilm 2354740 item 5.

[12] Sheldwich St. James parish, Sheldwich, Kent, England, Baptisms, 1813 - 1856, p.29, no. 227, Rebecca Rook, 1825; Canterbury Cathedral Archives, U3/186/1/3; FHL microfilm 2354740 item 5.

[13] Kent, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, 1538-1914

[14] Sheldwich St. James parish, Sheldwich, Kent, England, Baptisms, 1813 - 1856, p.36, no. 283, George Rook, 1825; Canterbury Cathedral Archives, U3/186/1/3; FHL microfilm 2354740 item 5.

1831- Death of sister Anne Cox (1775 - 1831) at Sheldwich, Kent, England.[15]

1837 - Death of daughter Elisabeth Rook Webb (1815 - 1837) at Snelling, Kent, England.[16]

1841- England Census at Kent, England.[17]

Samuel Rook, 65

Sarah Rook, 58

George Rook, 12

Ellen Rook, 9 *(relationship to the household not stated)*

11 Dec 1846 - Death of sister Frances Cox (1775 - 1831) at Sheldwich, Kent, England.[18]

1851- England Census at Kent, England.[19]

Samuel Rook, 80

Sarah Rook, 48

[15] Ancestry Family Tree, Cox Family Tree December 2012 created by Peter Cox, Australia

[16] Sheldwich St. James Parish, Sheldwich, Kent, England, Burials, 1813 - 1894, p.26, no. 204, Elizabeth Webb, 1837; digital image, "Canterbury Burials," FindMyPast; citing Canterbury Archdeaconry Burials 1538 - 1988, U3/186, Canterbury Cathedral Archives.

[17] 1841 England Census, Civil Parish: Sheldwick; County: Kent; Enumeration District: 10; Folio: 4; Page: 1; Line: 2; GSU roll: 306870, Samuel Rook household; digital image, "1841 England Census," Ancestry.

[18] Frances Parker, England, Select Deaths and Burials, 1538-1991

[19] 1851 England Census, Civil Parish: Sheldwick; County: Kent; Enumeration District: 10; Class: HO107; Piece: 1626; Folio: 144; Page: 9; GSU roll: 193527, Samuel Rook household; digital image, "1851 England Census," Ancestry.

13 Mar 1852 - Death of brother James Cox (1767 - 1852) at Godmersham, Kent, England.[20]

1853 - Death of sister Mary Cox (1764 - 1853) at Chart, Sutton, England.[21]

Apr 1855 - Death of husband Samuel Rook (1771 - 1855) at Swale Borough, Kent, England.[22]

After Samuel's death, Sarah received poor relief in 1861.

Oct 1861 - Death at Sheldwich, Kent, England.[23]

31 Oct 1861 - Burial at Sheldwich, Kent, England.[24]

[20] England Deaths and Burials, 1538-1991", database, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JZPM-DZN: 15 April 2023), James Cox, 1852.

[21] Mary Shirley, Great Britain, Select Deaths and Burials, 1778-1988

[22] Sheldwich St. James Parish, Sheldwich, Kent, England, Burials, 1813 - 1895, p.48, no. 382, Samuel Rook, 1855; Canterbury Cathedral Archives, U3/186/1/13; FHL microfilm 2354740 item 15.

[23] Sheldwich St. James Parish, Sheldwich, Kent, England, Burials, 1813 - 1895, p.48, no. 382, Sarah Rook, 1855; Canterbury Cathedral Archives, U3/186/1/13; FHL microfilm 2354740 item 15.

[24] Sheldwich St. James Parish, Sheldwich, Kent, England, Burials, 1813 - 1895, p.48, no. 382, Sarah Rook, 1855; Canterbury Cathedral Archives, U3/186/1/13; FHL microfilm 2354740 item 15.